

AccessLetter

*Cambridge Commission for
Persons with Disabilities*

ADA Symposium Provides Useful Updates

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS



The National Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Symposium brings together each year a passionate cohort of experts, advocates, and others dedicated to advancing the inclusion of

persons with all types of disabilities (PwD) into employment, education, recreation, transportation, emergency preparedness, health care, and other aspects of everyday life.

A project of the National ADA Network, which is made up of 10 regional ADA Centers across the country, the Symposium consists of a wide variety of breakout sessions providing comprehensive training on the ADA and other disability related laws. It is also an opportunity to network and hear about initiatives in other parts of the country. I had the great fortune of attending the three and a half day 2015 symposium in May, held in Atlanta.

In addition to the phenomenal learning experience, this year's Symposium was particularly special because it is the 25th anniversary of the passage of the ADA, so there was a celebratory and recommitment aspect to the event, as well. Both in the workshops and in networking opportunities, there was a lot of discussion about changing the conversation; much of the advocacy work during the first 25 years of the ADA has necessarily focused on enforcement of this sweeping civil rights legislation.

Participatory Budgeting Is Back— Submit Your Ideas!



Following a successful Participatory Budgeting (PB) pilot last year, the City of Cambridge launched its second PB process in June 2015. This

time, Cambridge community members will directly decide how to spend \$600,000 of the FY17 Capital Budget.

Last year, six projects won funding: 1) an accessible public toilet in Central Square, 2) 100 new trees and tree wells, 3) free public Wi-Fi in six outdoor locations, 4) bilingual books for children learning English, 5) twenty new laptops for the Community Learning Center, and 6) eight bike repair stations around town.

What projects and improvements would you like to see around Cambridge? The City will collect ideas from August 1st to 31st, 2015.

To submit a PB idea, please use the interactive online map at www.cambridgema.gov/yourbudget or contact Michelle Monsegur in the City's Budget Office at pb@cambridgema.gov or (617) 349-3266.

PB idea submissions are also being accepted via U.S. Mail or in-person at the Budget Office in Cambridge City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, Mass., 02139.

SAVE THE DATE!

**Disability Reframed: A
Community Film Series
Presents the New
England premiere of**

La Casa Linda

Saturday, November 7, 2015

2 to 4 PM

Cambridge Public Library

449 Broadway

(More on ADA Symposium, page 2)

(Participatory Budgeting, page 3)

ADA Symposium (continued from page 1)

In acknowledging both how incredibly far our country has come in increasing the inclusion of and accessibility for individuals with disabilities as well as the tremendous amount of work left to do, many attendees and panelists spoke about the need to change the conversation in order to get greater “buy-in” from, for example, places of public accommodation (stores, restaurants, theaters, etc.), employers, health care and transportation providers.

In other words, how do we help people understand that accessibility and inclusion benefit *everyone* and simply make good business sense without having to threaten or resort to legal action?

For example, Jim DeJong, Executive Director of the Great Plains ADA Center, which coordinated this year’s Symposium, suggested to the hosting hotel that they lower the beds in their accessible rooms because they didn’t meet ADA standards. In his friendly conversation with them, they decided to lower the beds in every single room to make them more wheelchair accessible and then decided to do so at their hotels nationwide. Another attendee who is Deaf made a suggestion that the hotel make texting available for room service; they had it set up within 15 minutes.

The Symposium closed with an opportunity to ask questions of a panel of experts from the Department of Justice (DOJ), City of Denver, Cornell University, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the U.S. Access Board, and the Southeast ADA Center. One issue that was addressed is the increase in individuals claiming that their pet dog is a service animal. In recent years, there have been sham companies popping up online that sell official-looking documentation certifying that the buyer’s dog is a service animal as defined by the ADA; many of them also sell service dog gear, such as vests, harnesses and tags identifying a dog as a service animal. However, these certifications carry no weight and the DOJ does not recognize them.

This is a multi-faceted problem that is difficult to resolve.

Many PwD who use legitimate service animals do not realize that it is illegal under federal law for businesses to require any kind of identification or documentation proving that a dog is a trained service animal. Consequently, people end up spending money on fraudulent certificates. On the flipside, these sham companies are making it easier for people to falsely claim that their pets are service animals, which ends up subjecting PwD who use service animals to greater scrutiny and can also put both people and service animals at risk. Service animals are trained professionals who know how to behave around other people and dogs in public settings. There have been many instances of untrained pets being passed off as service animals attacking working service dog teams.

While acknowledging that this is a big problem, Sally Conway, Deputy Chief of the DOJ’s Civil Rights Division and director of the Department’s ADA Technical Assistance Program, explained that there is little that the DOJ can do to address the problem. While there will always be people in the world who will exploit

certain populations or act fraudulently for personal gain, I personally believe that the vast majority of people mean well and do not act out of ill-will towards others. In this case, I suspect that a lot of people who falsely claim their dogs are service animals do not realize that their actions are making daily life more difficult for PwD. Thus, education and public awareness campaigns are vital in addressing this problem.

My ears especially perked up when someone asked if it is permissible under the ADA to use the new Accessible Icon in lieu of the traditional International Symbol of Accessibility (ISA). The Accessible Icon Project was co-created by Cambridge resident and artist Sara Hendren (see www.accessibleicon.org). In contrast with the static figure in the ISA, the Accessible Icon features a wheelchair user in motion and “on the go.” To many,



ADA expert panel (from left to right) : Joe Bontke, EEOC; Sally Conway, DOJ; Rex Pace, U.S. Access Board; Andrea Haenlin-Mott, Cornell Univ.; Ed Neuberg, City of Denver; John Wodatch, DOJ (retired)

Photo courtesy Great Plains ADA Center

this symbolizes the active, independent lives that a lot of people with disabilities lead.

Although several localities, including New York State, Phoenix, and Italy, have formally adopted this new



New Accessibility Icon

symbol of accessibility—which has received worldwide attention, there has been some controversy as to whether or not it is ADA compliant. I was thrilled to hear Ms. Conway say that the Accessible Icon does meet equivalent facilitation under the ADA. Equivalent facilitation under the ADA allows for slight

variations from certain standards so long as the variation provides equal or greater accessibility. The use of the Accessible Icon is permissible as long as it is used to provide the same level of notice of accessible features as the ISA would (in other words, it should be used in the same way the ISA is used, on signage, in



International Symbol of Accessibility

disability parking spaces, etc.). Personally, I feel that the switch to the Accessible Icon has real potential to help shift societal attitudes that have historically thought of PwD as being passive rather than active members of society.

I picked up so much valuable information at this Symposium that it's impossible to cover it all here, but I did live-Tweet from the conference. Go to www.twitter.com/CambCPD to see our Twitter feed (you do not need to have a Twitter account to do so). The passion in the room was inspiring, rejuvenating and motivating, and I am tremendously grateful for having had the opportunity to be a part of the 2015 National ADA Symposium.

--by Kate Thurman

Participatory Budgeting (continued from page 1)

To be eligible for funding, project ideas must meet the following criteria:

- Benefit the public. Projects that only benefit private individuals or groups are not eligible.

- Are implemented by the City of Cambridge on public property.
- Are one-time, capital expenditures that do not exceed \$600,000.

Submit your ideas today! Cambridge would love to hear from you about how to make the City a better place for everyone.

Re-birth, Justice and Inclusion at the 25th Anniversary of the ADA

Today, June 6, 2015 is for me, what some of us refer to as our Rebirth-day. 45 years ago today I was not able to stand to get out of bed in the morning and my uncle came and carried me out of my house and drove me to the hospital to figure out what was going on.

I have a spinal cord injury due to scoliosis and it had progressed just that little bit too far compressing my spinal cord. There was no great drama, no tragic car accident, no grenade in a distant war, no magnificent slightly miscalculated dive off the cliffs in Acapulco. No story of glory to tell.

It's that day we mark and many look back on, perhaps surprisingly to some, in celebration of the life changing moment that helped make us who we are today. It may have been the day when we crashed our new motorcycle, or finally got diagnosed with our disabilities or the last day that we were able to walk, or the day we lost our sight. It's a day when we entered into a new world, when we began a journey to finding a new and powerful sense of self.

We became part of a wonderful new community of people wiser for that life changing moment if only because we are more aware and more comfortable with impermanence and the reality that all human beings are imperfect and that's perfectly fine. The disability community is made up of people who have learned that weakness can be a strength, that although we have sometimes been alone or hurt there is light, we can be loved and cared for in the dark times, that people will stand up for us, and most importantly that we can stand up for ourselves and for each other.

(More on Re-birth, Justice, page 4)

Re-birth, Justice (continued from page 3)

As the ADA comes close to its 25th birthday we have lots to celebrate. Few of us came consciously or willingly to disability or the struggle for access, justice, and inclusion, but we have come together, formed a vibrant talented and powerful community. And just look how we changed the world!

Our work is not done until all our brothers and sisters are freed from the confines of institutions, no longer hurt by outdated and limiting stereotypes, and no longer controlled by service systems structured to keep people in line and on the margins.

I am blessed and honored to have been loved and guided by so many of you who went before me in this battle. I'm also excited and amazed every day by the young folks I get to work with who are taking up this work in ways that are increasingly intersectional and committed to naming and dismantling those core structures and beliefs in society that divide the human family.

Perhaps the most hopeful and inspiring thing for me in these times is the rise in artistic expression within the disability community. Seeing more folks using art, dance, poetry, music, writing, and elegant science for personal expression, community connection, and activism delights me. It is so important because we can't just dismantle things, we have to simultaneously build the world we want to live in.

--Laura Rauscher



Welcome New CCPD Members

We are pleased to report that City Manager Richard Rossi has appointed Gary Dmytryk, Maria Fontellio, Zahra Kanji, and Alicia Zeh-Dean to the CCPD Advisory Board. Here are some brief bios to help you get to know them:

Gary Dmytryk

Gary has over ten years' experience working in community mental health and social work and has also worked in information technology. He is active in the Cambridge community and recently served for two years as President of the Association of Cambridge Neighborhoods.

Maria Fontellio

Maria has been a Cambridge resident for 36 years and has experience working at Eastern Bank, Hallmark Health Systems, is a member of the Black Professional Alliance, Chairperson of the Stewardship Committee at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church and former Parish Clerk.

Zahra Kanji

Zahra has worked as an engineer with the Perkins School of the Blind and has done research on building products that can help people with disabilities at MIT. She is also a graduate of Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Alicia Zeh-Dean

Alicia is a resident of Cambridge and an occupational therapist in the Cambridge Public School District. She is also an Assistive Technology Specialist with Easter Seals. She has an interest in issues regarding accessibility for individuals with sensory, cognitive and physical disabilities.

Please join us in welcoming our four newest members to our Commission!

Upcoming Events of Interest to the Disability Community (See end of Calendar for all weekly and recurring events)

Now-Sept. 27 **Adaptive Sailing on the Charles River** – Learn to sail and enjoy the Boston scenery. Modified sailboats and adaptive support provided as needed. "Pay what you can" fee system, pre-registration required.

The days and schedule varies; call or email Community Boating Inc. for information or to register: 617.523.1038, uap@community-boating.org.

- Aug. 3 **Flat-Water Kayaking on Walden Pond** – Experience flat-water kayaking on historic Walden Pond with All Out Adventures. Adaptations and support available as needed. Sign up for an hour long paddle between 9:45am – 3:13pm for \$5! Call All Out Adventures to register: 413.584.2052.
- Aug. 5 **Archery on the North Shore** – Spaulding Rehab's Archery Program at Endicott Park, 57 Forest Street in Danvers is open to individuals of all abilities who are eager to shoot or interested in picking up the sport for the first time. Spaulding Adaptive Sports has an array of bows, arrows, and adaptive equipment for participants' use. The program is delivered under the supervision of Spaulding clinicians and adaptive sports professionals. Staff members help each participant find an appropriate device and technique based on that person's strengths. Session A runs from 10am-noon and Session B is from 12:30pm-2:30pm. Each session is \$20 and pre-registration is required; contact Mark Priest at 877.976.7272 or mpriest1@partners.org.
- Aug. 9 **Summer Fair in Chelmsford for Kids with Disabilities** – Free to Kids with disabilities and their families. Games, crafts, parachutes and prizes. The fair will be held from 9:300-11:30am at The Paul Center for Learning and Recreation, Inc., 39 Concord Road, in Chelmsford. Sponsored and run by the Knights of Columbus Chelmsford/Westford/Littleton, MA. For more information visit www.kofc9275.org/. Registration is required: 978.692.6866 or kgdesigned@gmail.com
- Aug. 10 **Flat-Water Kayaking on Walden Pond** – See August 3 listing for details.
- Aug. 10 **All Access Pass Tour of VSA Mass**– Free tour of VSA Mass, a non-profit promoting the involvement of people of all abilities in the cultural life of our communities. Tour will be held at noon at 89 South Street in Boston and will take no more than an hour. Come learn more about our work towards educational and cultural inclusion. We'll share some inspiring stories about how the arts transform our communities and create opportunities for inclusion. To reserve a spot and/or request ASL interpretation or other accommodations please contact Kati Blair Kotrc at 617.350.7713 x101 or kati@vsamass.org.
- Aug. 15 **Open Captioned (OC) Performance of KINKY BOOTS** – OC will be provided at this 2pm performance at the Boston Opera House. Tickets start at \$44 and may be purchased online, at the Boston Opera House Box Office (539 Washington Street in Boston) or by phone at 617.880.2419. Be sure to request OC seating. For more information or to purchase tickets online, visit http://boston.broadway.com/accessible_services/. For information on the Tony Award Winning musical, KINKY BOOTS, visit <http://kinkybootsthemusical.com>
- Aug. 16 **Audio Described (AD) Performance of KINKY BOOTS** – AD will be provided at this 1pm performance at the Boston Opera House. Be sure to request AD when purchasing tickets. See Aug. 15 listing for the remaining details.
- Aug. 17 **Flat-Water Kayaking on Walden Pond** – See August 3 listing for details.
- Aug. 17 **FREE Adaptive Horseback Riding in Topsfield** – Join Windrush Farm at Bradley Palmer State Park, on Asbury Street in Topsfield for a day of horseback riding from 10am-2pm. Although free, pre-registration is required and this popular program fills up fast! To receive program-specific waivers, register, and reserve a spot, call Rachael at 413.545.5745 or Jenna at 978.682.7855. For more information on Windrush Farm, visit www.windrushfarm.org.
- Aug. 18 **FREE Adaptive Horseback Riding in Topsfield** – See August 17 listing for details.

- Aug. 22 **American Sign Language Performance of KINKY BOOTS** – ASL will be provided at this 2pm performance at the Boston Opera House. Be sure to request ASL seating. See Aug. 15 listing for the remaining details.
- Aug. 23 **Drum Circle Rhythm Therapy** – Offered by Spaulding Adaptive Sports Centers and CAPEable Adventures, this FREE drum circle provides an opportunity for meditation and calmness through the use of rhythm and sound. When attending rhythm therapy, you may enjoy the music passively or actively participate with drums provided by Spaulding Adaptive Sports. This group meets from 2-3pm on the front patio of Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, 300 First Avenue in Charlestown. Although free, pre-registration is required to Mark Priest at 877.976.7272 or mpriest1@partners.org.
- Aug. 24 **Boston Children's Museum Morningstar Access** – Morningstar Access offers children with special needs/medical needs the opportunity to visit the Museum from 8-10am, a time when there are only a few other visitors. At these times, there is a limit of 100 guests, so children and their families can explore the Museum with less concern about infections and large crowds. Fee is \$8 per person (half-priced admission; free for members) and registration is required. For more information or to register, visit www.bostonchildrensmuseum.org/morningstar or email Saki Iwamoto, Health and Wellness Educator at Iwamoto@BostonChildrensMuseum.org or call 617.986.3697.
- Aug. 26 **Adaptive Ice Skating** – Join DCR's Universal Access Program (UAP) for an afternoon of skating, socializing, and snacking from 11am-2pm at Cronin Rink, 870 Revere Beach Pkwy in Revere. We'll be skating and playing games inside on the ice, and grilling burgers and hot dogs outside. Join us to beat the heat and celebrate summer skating! Call the UAP to register: 413.545.5758.
- Sept. 1 **Ferry Trip and Island Tour for People of All Abilities** – Join Stavros Outdoor Access for a ferry trip and tour of Spectacle Island in the Boston Harbor. Teamwork and assistive equipment, such as the Terra Trek mountain wheelchair, unite people of all abilities! Bring a lunch and enjoy activities like scavenger hunts, nature talks, and letterboxing. Sighted guides available. This program is \$3 per person, \$5 for families, and \$25 for groups. Call Stavros Outdoor Access for more information, including time & meeting location or to register: 413.259.0009.
- Sept. 2 **Archery on the North Shore** – See August 5 listing for details.
- Sept. 7 **Boston Children's Museum Morningstar Access** – See August 24 listing for details.
- Sept. 10 **Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) Monthly Meeting** – meets in the 2nd floor Conference Room at 51 Inman Street from 5:30-7pm with opportunity for public comment. Call 617.349.4692 (voice), 617.492.0235 (TTY), or e-mail ccpd@cambridgema.gov for more information or to request accommodations.
- Sept. 13 **All Access Pass Tour of VSA Mass** – This free tour will be held at 5:45pm. See August 10 listing for other details, including registration information.
- Sept. 17 **Adaptive Cycling** – Join All Out Adventures from 11am-3pm in Artesani Park, Brighton and explore a wide variety of adaptive bikes for adults and kids, including hand cycles, trikes, tandems, and recumbent bikes. Cost is \$3 and pre-registration required. Call All Out Adventures to register: 413.584.2052
- Sept. 18-20 **Abilities Expo Boston** – Imagine everything you need, all under one roof! For more than 30 years, Abilities Expo has been the go-to source for the Community of people with disabilities, their families, seniors, veterans and healthcare professionals. Every event opens your eyes to new technologies, new possibilities, new solutions and new opportunities to change your life. Where else can you discover ability-enhancing

products and services, play a few adaptive sports, learn new dance moves, attend informative workshops and only scratch the surface of what Abilities Expo has to offer? For more information or to register for this FREE event, visit www.abilities.com/boston.

Sept. 25 **All Access Pass Tour of VSA Mass**– This free tour will be held at noon. See August 10 listing for other details, including registration information.

Weekly & Recurring Events

Access to Art tours – the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in Boston offers a series of visitor centered, interactive tours designed for groups with disabilities or if persons with disabilities prefer an individual tour with a companion or care partner. There is no fee for these tours but most require pre-registration. Contact us for a sighted guide or other access accommodation: Hannah Goodwin at 617.369.3189 (voice), 617.369.3395 (TTY), or email access@mfa.org. The MFA is located at 465 Huntington Avenue and is accessible by the Green line “Museum of Fine Arts” stop, or the Orange line “Ruggles” stop. Please visit www.mfa.org for more information.

Injured Worker Support Meetings – Meetings are scheduled by appointment, often the 1st Wednesday of the month, 5:15 - 6:45 pm, but other times can be arranged. Appointments usually take place at 650 Beacon Street, Kenmore Square, Boston, 4th Floor Conference Room. RSI Action volunteers answer questions and provide resources and support to people with RSIs (Repetitive Strain Injuries) or other workplace injuries. To set up a meeting or more info, call 617.247.6827, or visit www.rsiaction.org.

Mondays

FREE Basic Yoga for Women – Offered by the Cambridge Women’s Center at 46 Pleasant Street, this group meets each Monday from 6-7pm and uses basic breath work and poses to relax and rejuvenate the mind, body and spirit. Space is limited, so pre-registration is required at 617.354.6394 or maddybeauregard@gmail.com.

NAMI Support Group for Caregivers – A free support meeting sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) for family members of people with mental illness where they can talk frankly about their challenges and support each other in coping with all the problems that arise in dealing with their loved ones. This group meets on the 1st, 3rd and 4th Mondays of each month at 7:30pm at the Cambridge Hospital Learning Center, Conference Room A, 3rd Floor, 1493 Cambridge Street. For more information, see www.namimass.org/programs, or contact Elizabeth at elizabeth@nami-cambridgemiddlesex.org or 781.646.0397.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Support Group – meets biweekly on the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month from 7-8:30pm at the Friends Meeting House, 5 Longfellow Park, Cambridge. This group is open to anyone with OCD or related disorder and is a casual, open discussion of the trials and triumphs! of living with OCD. \$5.00 suggested donation. For more information e-mail ocdgroupcambridge@gmail.com.

Tuesdays

Computer Lab Open to Public – Every Tuesday from 3-5:45 pm Cambridge Community Television at 438 Massachusetts Avenue offers free computer access, plus assistance from a friendly volunteer who can help with job searching, online job applications, basic computer skills, and much more. This drop-in time is open to the public and there is no need to sign up, just stop by! Call 617.661.6900 for more information.

Wednesdays

Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA (AACT) meets 1 – 3 p.m. at the State Transportation Building, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, 2nd floor Conference Room #2 and 3 on the 4th Wednesday of each month. Call 617.973.7507 (voice) or 617.973.7089 (TTY) or email aact@ctps.org to request interpreters.

Amputee Support Group – Offered by Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, all amputees, their family and friends are invited to socialize and discuss common areas of interest, including accessibility and resources, as well as to provide support and share coping strategies. Meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month from 1-2:30pm on the 5th floor, in the Lantern Room 5, at Spaulding Rehab Hospital, 300 First Avenue, Charlestown Navy Yard (accessible by MBTA bus routes 89 & 93). For more information, see www.spauldingrehab.org/events/supportgroupevents or contact Sally Johnson, LICSW at 617.952.6254 (voice), 1.800.439.2370 (TTY), or by email at sejohnson@partners.org.

Assistive Technology Resource Center (ARTC) Open House – The ARTC, which helps people with disabilities in Eastern Massachusetts make informed decisions about assistive technology they can use to increase their independence at home, on the job or in school, holds an open house on the 1st Wednesday of each month from 8:30am-4:30pm. These FREE monthly open houses provide an opportunity to see what kinds of assistive technology products are available, and to try them out. The ARTC is located at the Boston Easter Seals office, 89 South Street (one block from MBTA South Station). Visit www.eastersealsma.org, call 617.226.2634, or email ATRC@eastersealsma.org for more information.

Carroll Center for the Blind Information Day – Learn more about Carroll Center programs and our visual impairment services the 1st Wednesday of every month (except in January and July). See the campus, learn from rehabilitation instructors, and talk to graduates about their experience in adult and senior rehabilitation and technology programs. And lunch is provided free of charge! Sessions start promptly at 10am and end at 2pm. *Special dates are offered tours about summer offerings for youth.* Staff loves the chance to help participants become informed, relaxed, and motivated! To make a reservation (required), email maureen.foley@carroll.org or call 1.800.852.3131 ext. 225 w. the name of each guest attending. Family and friends are welcome. The Carroll Center is located at 770 Centre Street in Newton.

DBSA-Boston (Depression Bipolar Support Alliance of Boston) Support Group meets every Wednesday from 7-9pm in the cafeteria in de Marneffe Building at McLean Hospital in Belmont. On the 2nd and 4th Wednesday there is a lecture from 7-8pm, then group from 8-9pm. Call 617.855.2795 or visit www.dbsaboston.org for more information.

Free tour of MFA in American Sign Language (ASL) – for visitors and their family and friends who are fluent in ASL. Monthly offering at the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in Boston, the tour explores a different part of the Museum each month. These tours will start at 6:30pm on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. No pre-registration is required; meet at the Sharf Visitor Center in the MFA. For more information about accessible programs call 617.369.3302 (voice), 617.369.3395 (TTY) or e-mail access@mfa.org.

HOLLAoffline: We've Got Your Back! – Join the Cambridge Women's Center on the last Wednesday of every month for a free street harassment support and discussion group, open to all who identify as women. We're here as a resource and we've got your back! 7-8pm at the Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street in Cambridge. For more information, email boston@ihollaback.com.

Life Changes Support Group for Women – Change happens in life whether we choose it or whether it catches us by surprise. Either way, you don't have to be alone. Whatever new or different thing you're dealing with, whether the start of something new, an ending or a changing situation, come and let us hold your hand through it. Together we'll pool our wisdom; we'll look at what got you here, offer some tools for getting through and guidance for next steps. We'll use some writing, art, a little ritual but mostly good old fashioned support. This group is held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month from 6:30-8pm at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street. For more information, email Susan at changegroup26@gmail.com.

NAMI Connection – Support group for adults with mental illness sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), meets every Wednesday and Friday 10:30-12:00 at the Cambridge Somerville Recovery Learning Center, 35 Medford Street, Suite 201 in Somerville. The group is free and open to all who self-identify

as having a mental illness, regardless of diagnosis. For more information, contact Janel Tan at 617.863.5388 or tanj@vinfen.org. *We are moving to the first floor, exact room# tba.*

Open Support Group for Adults on the Autism Spectrum – Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month, 7-8:30 pm at the offices of the Asperger's Association of New England (AANE), 85 Main St., Suite 101, Watertown, MA. A \$5 donation is suggested. RSVP to 617.393.3824, x310 or jamie.Freed@aane.org.

Senior Support Group for Caregivers over 60 – meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at the Family Resource Center, 20 Gould Street in Reading. Share and learn with other seniors who have adult family members with developmental disabilities. For meeting times or more information, contact Judy Santa Maria at 781.942.4888, x4022 or familysupport@theemarc.org.

Spaulding Stroke Support Group – This community-based support group offered by Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital (SRH) provides socialization and education for stroke survivors, meeting on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from 3-4:30pm at Spaulding Rehab Hospital, 300 First Avenue, Charlestown Navy Yard (accessible by MBTA bus routes 89 & 93). Contact Karen Halfon at 617.952.6560 (voice), 1.800.439.2370 (TTY), or e-mail at khalfon@partners.org. Visit us at www.spauldingrehab.org.

Thursdays

Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) Monthly Meeting – generally meets on the 2nd Thursday, at 51 Inman Street, 2nd floor Conference Room, 5:30-7pm with opportunity for public comment. Call 617.349.4692 (voice), 617.492.0235 (TTY) or e-mail ccpd@cambridgema.gov for more information or to request accommodations. [NOTE: the Commission will not be holding a meeting in August].

Brain Injury Survivor Support Group in Bedford – Sponsored by the Brain Injury Association of MA, this group is held on the 3rd Thursday of each month from 1-3pm in the Community Room at Village at Taylor Pond, 3000 Taylor Pond Ln. (59 Middlesex Tpk.) in Bedford. Please contact Joanne Stephen at joannejstp@aol.com or 781.698.6169 before attending.

DBSA-Boston (Depression Bipolar Support Alliance of Boston) Support Group – meets at Mass. General Hospital every Thursday, 7 - 9 p.m. in the Schiff Conference Center Room, Suite 4A on the 4th floor in the Yawkey Building. Follow the signs. Meetings are free and open to public. For more information call 617.855.2795 or e-mail mghgroup@dbsaboston.org.

Ladies, Let's Talk About It: Women's Narcotic Anonymous (NA) Meeting – meets every Thursday at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, from 6:30-8pm. This is a support group for women recovering from drug and alcohol abuse. For more information, call 617.354.8807

One-on-One for Women with Nurse Pat – Held on the 3rd Thursday from 12:45-1:30pm at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street. Need any health related support or questions answered? Sign up in advance or walk in for a 15-min individual consulting time with Pat Maher, Nurse Practitioner from Cambridge Health Alliance. For more information or to sign up, call 617.591.6731

Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Support Group – Offered by the Greater Boston Chapter, National Spinal Cord Injury Association. Weekly support group meets every Thursday from 4-5pm, is for anyone affected by SCI, to help and inspire the newly injured through role models and peer mentors, and to support individuals and family members as they begin their post-injury journeys. This group is held at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, 6th floor, Lantern Room, 300 First Ave, Charlestown Navy Yard (accessible by MBTA bus routes 89 & 93). E-mail sciboston@aol.com for more information.

Fridays

Free Fun Fridays is Back! – Every Friday through August 28. Free admission at designated cultural attractions throughout Massachusetts, such as Boston Children’s Museum, JFK Library, Franklin Park Zoo, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, and many more – this year’s schedule includes 70 different cultural venues! Visit www.highlandstreet.org for the Free Fun Fridays schedule or call 617.969.8900.

NAMI Connection – a support group for adults with mental illness sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), meets every Wednesday and Friday 10:30am-12:00pm at the Cambridge Somerville Recovery Learning Center. See Wednesday listing for details.

Second Fridays are FREE at the MIT Museum – Jump-start your weekend with the MIT Museum! Get up close and personal with Kismet the Robot, or see the world in 3-D through our one-of-a-kind holography exhibit. Enjoy performances, demonstrations, and lectures throughout our galleries. Mix and mingle; relax and unwind. Museum admission, including the galleries and additional activities, is free from 5-8pm on the 2nd Friday of every month. The Museum is located in Building N51 at 265 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge. See web.mit.edu/museum/programs/secondfridays.html or call 617.253.5927 for more information.

Saturdays

Boston Acquired Brain Injury Support Group (BABIS) – The mission of this free support group is to provide a positive forum for peer socialization, hope and education for people with acquired brain injury, their family and friends. This group is held on the 1st Saturday of the month, from 10am-12pm at Spaulding Rehab Hospital, 300 First Avenue, Charlestown Navy Yard (accessible by MBTA bus routes 89 & 93). No registration required, just show up! For more information, call Sally Johnson, LICSW at 617.573.2539 (voice), 1.800.439.2370 (TTY), e-mail babisgroup@hotmail.com, or visit www.babis.info.

Beyond the Spectrum: Adventures in Art for Children with Autism – Offered by the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA), Artful Adventures offers a specially designed program for children ages 8-12 on the Autism Spectrum, including Asperger’s Syndrome, accompanied by a parent or caregiver. Upon arrival children will be divided into groups by age and/or needs. The program meets on the 1st Saturday of each month from 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. Each class lasts an hour and a half and combines gallery exploration with an art-making activity. Pre-registration is required by the prior Tuesday. The cost is \$9.50 per child (includes materials and museum admission), and one adult is admitted free with each child ticket, which also includes discounted parking. The program meets in the Education Center in Druker Family Pavilion, Room 159 at 10:20am before the start of each class. For more information, or to pre-register, go to www.mfa.org/programs/community-programs/beyond-the-spectrum, call 617.369.3303 or email artfuladventures@mfa.org.

Access to Art: Second Saturdays -- For individuals with memory loss or dementia, and their care partners. Second Saturdays meet at 10am on the 2nd Saturday of each month. Pre-registration is required. For more information or to register for a tour please call 617.369.3302 (voice) or email: access@mfa.org.

Sundays

Computer Lab Open to Public – Every Sunday from 4-5:30pm Cambridge Community Television at 438 Massachusetts Avenue offers free computer access, plus assistance from a friendly volunteer who can help with job searching, online job applications, basic computer skills, and much more. This drop-in time is open to the public and there is no need to sign up, just stop by! Call 617.661.6900 for more information.

Wenham Museum Spectrum Express -- Welcomes families with members on the autism spectrum to come enjoy the model railroad trains and their other favorite exhibits the 1st Sunday of each month at 9am at regular admission prices or free for members. The museum opens to the general public at 10am. Visit www.wenhammuseum.org/youth_families.html or call our Welcome Desk at 978.468.2377 with any questions.

Feeling for Form Tours of MFA for blind & low vision visitors -- The Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in Boston offers a series of guided tours for visitors who are blind or have low vision who want to build a deeper relationship with the Museum. Each monthly session focuses on a different collection and includes wayfinding and verbal description of spaces. The Sunday tours are held on the 1st Sunday of the month at 1pm, with the exception of some holiday weekends, and require pre-registration at least one week in advance. Call 617.369.3302 to register. Family and friends are invited to come along. Guided tours can also be scheduled on request, please contact Hannah Goodwin at 617.369.3189 or access@mfa.org for more information.

Access Notice: The City of Cambridge and Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) does not discriminate on the basis of disability. **AccessLetter** newsletter is available via email, in large print and other alternative formats upon request. To add your name to our mailing list, to inquire about alternative formats, or for information about other auxiliary aids and services or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures, contact CCPD.

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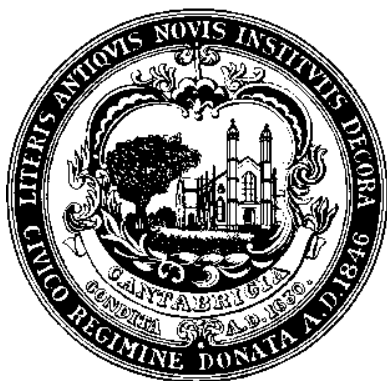
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